



Cal Poly Organic Farm

Community Supported Agriculture Newsletter

www.calpolyorgfarm.com

CPOF ANNOUNCEMENTS

Membership forms for the Fall/Winter '08-09 CPOF CSA season will be posted online and a form will be sent home with the shares within the next couple of weeks. We look forward to continuing to provide you with produce!

U-Pick Sweet Peas (on the upper slope across from the chicken coop) as long as they last!

Sweet Pea (*Lathyrus odoratus*) is an annual climbing plant with pinnate leaves (they have a central axis or stem with parts branching off it) with two leaflets and a terminal tendrils. **UNLIKE MOST PEAS, THE SEEDS OF THE SWEET PEA ARE POISONOUS AS THEY CONTAIN A NEUROTOXIN, AND SHOULD NOT BE EATEN.**

Save the Date: Thursday, October 2nd for the 4th Annual Sustainable Agriculture Resource Consortium's 4th Annual Fundraiser This year's special guest speaker will be one of 'Cal Poly's own', Tim LaSalle, former professor in the College of Agriculture, Food & Environmental Sciences. Mr. LaSalle is the CEO of the Rodale Institute, the oldest research and educational organization dedicated exclusively to organic agriculture in the United States. Join us for the family-style dinner, featuring sustainably raised ingredients prepared by some of the Central Coast's finest chefs and vintners at 5:30 p.m. at the Congregation Beth David on Los Osos Valley Road.

Support Poly Plant Shop Buy a plant during CSA pick up hours on July 28th and August 4th and receive 10% off. For more information, please call: 805-756-1106 or stop by Poly Plant Shop on Via Carta Road.

Fundraiser to **benefit the Morro Bay**

Community Garden! There will be organic food and fun for all ages on Sunday, July 20th from 1 p.m. to 4 p.m. at the garden on Ironwood Ave. (next to the Estero United Methodist Church and Del Mar Park in Morro Bay (East San Jacinto off Hwy 1, Up Hill to Ironwood Ave, Left Ironwood, Garden on Left before Del Mar Park). The cost to attend is \$12 for adults and \$8 for children 8.

Special thanks to 'The Pond Place' located at 207 Higuera St. in San Luis Obispo for supporting the Cal Poly Organic Farm's effort to refurbish the water feature near the entry of the farm by offering discounted

Week 16 Produce

July 20 – July 26, 2008

Full Shares expect 10-12 items

Small Shares expect 8-10 items from the following list:

- * **Carrots** – Combine freshly squeezed carrot juice with soy milk and bananas to make a nutrient-dense breakfast shake.
- * **Parsley** – Parsley is the world's most popular herb.
- * **Cucumbers** – To be "cool as a cucumber" add them to your menus during the warm summer months.
- * **Summer squash** – The entire vegetable, including its flesh, seeds and skin, is edible.
- * **Spring salad mix** – Just add your favorite dressing!
- * **Celery root** – Celeriac has a celery flavour, and is often used as a flavouring in soups and stews; it can also be used on its own, usually mashed, or used in casseroles, gratins and baked dishes.
- * **Cilantro** – Fresh coriander (cilantro) should be washed right before using since it is highly fragile.
- * **Kale** – The taste and texture of steamed kale makes it a wonderful topping for homemade pizzas.
- * **Raspberries (7th Heaven)** – Raspberries are an excellent source of fiber, manganese and vitamin C.
- * **Strawberries (Living Soil Farm)** – Since they are very perishable, strawberries should not be washed until right before eating or using in a recipe.
- * **Romaine Lettuce (Clark Valley Farm)** - Lettuce is among the 12 foods on which pesticide residues have been most frequently found; individuals wanting to avoid pesticide-associated health risks may want to avoid consumption of lettuce unless it is grown organically.
- * **Potatoes (Growing Grounds)** - Toss steamed, diced potato with olive oil and fresh herbs of your choice.
- * **Cauliflower (A&A Farms)** - Store uncooked cauliflower in a paper or plastic bag in the refrigerator where it will keep for up to a week. To prevent moisture from developing in the floret clusters, store it with the stem side down.

Unless otherwise noted, all vegetables are from the CPOF.
Unless otherwise noted, all vegetables are certified organic.

pricing and valuable expertise. If you're interested in creating or maintaining a pond or water feature of your own, be sure to swing by or call: 805-543-2210.

This week on Food Chain Radio: *Future of Our Food* (#596). This Saturday at 9am Pacific, the Food Chain with Michael Olson hosts Paul Roberts, author of *The End of Food*, and Mark Winne, author of *Closing the Food Gap*, for a conversation about the future of our food chain. Log on the Food Chain page at www.metrofarm.com to listen on your radio, computer or IPOD.

Questions about your membership? Looking for an old newsletter? Have you lost your CSA Calendar? Find all this and more at: www.calpolyorgfarm.com.

FRUIT OF THE WEEK: CUCUMBERS

The phrase "cool as a cucumber" is not without merit. This vegetable's high water content gives it a very unique moist and cooling taste.



Cucumbers, scientifically known as *Cucumis sativus*, are grown to either be eaten fresh or to be pickled. Those that are to be eaten fresh are commonly called slicing cucumbers. They are cylindrical in shape and commonly range in length from about six to nine inches, although they can be smaller or much larger. Their skin, which ranges in color from green to white, may either be smoothed or ridged depending upon the variety. Inside a cucumber is a very pale green flesh that is dense yet aqueous and crunchy at the same time, as well as numerous edible fleshy seeds. Some varieties, which are grown in greenhouses, are seedless, have thinner skins and are longer in length, usually between 12 and 20 inches. These varieties are often referred to as "burpless" cucumbers since people find them easier to digest than the other varieties of cucumbers.

History

Cucumbers were thought to originate over 10,000 years ago in southern Asia. Early explorers and travelers introduced this vegetable to India and other parts of Asia. It was very popular in the ancient civilizations of Egypt, Greece and Rome, whose people used it not only as a food but also for its beneficial skin healing properties. Greenhouse cultivation of cucumbers was originally invented during the time of Louis XIV, who greatly appreciated this delightful vegetable. The early colonists introduced cucumbers to the United States.

While it is unknown when the pickling process was developed, researchers speculate that the gherkin variety of cucumber was developed from a plant native to Africa. During ancient times, Spain was one of the countries that was pickling cucumbers since Roman emperors were said to have imported them from this Mediterranean country.

Selection and Storage

Cukes should be firm, rounded at their edges, and their color should be a bright medium to dark green. Avoid cucumbers that are yellow, puffy, have sunken water-soaked areas, or are wrinkled at their tips. Thinner cucumbers will generally have less seeds than those that are thicker. While many people are used to purchasing cucumbers that have a waxed coating, it is highly recommended to choose those that are unwaxed, so the nutrient-rich skin can be eaten without consuming the wax and any chemicals trapped in it.

Cucumbers should be stored in the refrigerator where they will keep for several days. If you do not use the entire cucumber during one meal, wrap the remainder tightly in plastic or place it in a sealed container so that it does not become dried out. For maximum quality, cucumber should be used within one or two days. Cucumbers should not be left out at room temperature for too long, as this will cause them to wilt and become limp.

Health Benefits

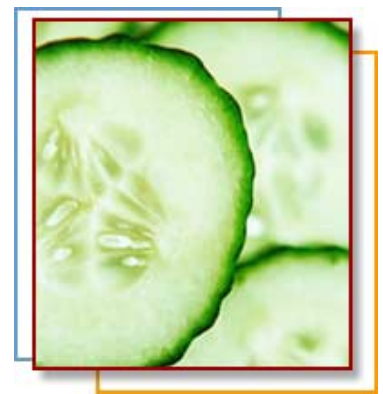
Cucumbers are a very good source of the vitamins C and the mineral molybdenum. They are also a good source of vitamin A, potassium, manganese, folate, dietary fiber and magnesium and contain the important mineral silica.

Preparation Tips

Unwaxed cucumbers do not need to be peeled but should be washed before cutting. Waxed cucumbers should always be peeled first. Cucumbers can be sliced, diced or cut into sticks. While the seeds are edible and nutritious, some people prefer not to eat them. To easily remove them, cut the cucumber lengthwise and use the tip of a spoon to gently scoop them out.

A Few Quick Serving Ideas:

- * Use half-inch thick cucumber slices as serving "dishes" for chopped vegetable salads.



- * Mix diced cucumbers with sugar snap peas and mint leaves and toss with rice wine vinaigrette.
- * For refreshing cold gazpacho soup that takes five minutes or less to make, simply purée cucumbers, tomatoes, green peppers and onions, then add salt and pepper to taste.
- * Add diced cucumber to tuna fish or chicken salad recipes.
- * Cucumbers (except for the lemon cucumbers) can be cooked until just crisp-tender and flavored with a little olive oil and herbs such as, dill, chives or parsley.

Chilled Cucumber Soup

1 garlic clove, minced
2 green onions, chopped
salt and pepper



2 tablespoons olive oil
1-1/2 cups plain yogurt
1/2 cup buttermilk
1 tablespoons lemon juice
1/2 cup chopped walnuts
1/2 cup cracked ice
2 cucumbers, peeled, seeded, and sliced

In blender or food processor, combine all ingredients and blend or process, using on and off function, until soup is of desired consistency. You may need to add more cracked ice. This soup can be chilled for a few hours before serving, or served immediately.

Gazpacho

3 tomatoes, chopped
2 cucumbers, chopped
1/2 red onion, chopped
1 green bell pepper, chopped
1 yellow bell pepper, chopped
1 garlic clove, minced
1 tablespoon extra virgin olive oil
1 tablespoon lemon juice
4 cups vegetable cocktail juice
garlic croutons



In a large glass bowl, combine all ingredients except croutons and mix gently. Cover and refrigerate for at least 4 hours to blend flavors. Serve chilled, topped with croutons.

Bread Salad with Tomatoes and Cucumbers

This rustic Tuscan salad, called panzanella, is best when made with a chewy, coarsely textured white bread. The bread must be at least 3 to 4 days old to provide the correct texture when mixed with tomatoes and vinaigrette.

3 lemon cucumbers or 1 English (hothouse) cucumber, peeled, halved, seeded and diced
1/2 pound stale coarse-textured white bread
1/2 cup water
5 ripe tomatoes, 1 1/2 to 2 lb. total, seeded and diced
1 red onion, diced
4 to 5 tablespoons red wine vinegar
1/3 cup extra-virgin olive oil
salt and freshly ground pepper, to taste
1/2 cup loosely packed fresh basil leaves, torn into small pieces



1. Spread the diced cucumbers on paper towels and sprinkle with salt. Let stand for 15 minutes. Place the cucumbers in a colander and rinse with cold water. Pat dry with paper towels.
2. Meanwhile, cut the bread into slices 1-inch thick and place in a shallow dish. Sprinkle the bread with the water and let stand for 2 minutes. Then carefully squeeze the bread until it is dry. Tear into rough 1-inch pieces and place on paper towels. Let stand for 10 minutes.

- In a bowl, combine the cucumbers, tomatoes, onion and bread; toss gently.
- In a large bowl, whisk together the vinegar and olive oil. Season with salt and pepper. Add the bread mixture and the basil, mix gently and refrigerate for at least 1 hour or for up to 4 hours. Serve chilled.

Cucumber Salad



6 medium cucumbers
 2 teaspoons salt
 2 tablespoons lemon juice
 3 tablespoons sugar
 1 medium onion, sliced

- Wash cucumbers. Do not peel. Slice thinly. Sprinkle with salt and let sit for 20 minutes. Drain.
- Add lemon juice, sugar and onion and refrigerate for a few hours.

Cauliflower, White Bean, and Feta Salad

1/3 cup olive oil
 1 teaspoon minced fresh rosemary
 2 tablespoons fresh lemon juice
 1 tablespoon red wine vinegar
 2 1/2 teaspoons finely grated lemon peel
 1 1/2 teaspoons salt
 1/2 teaspoon ground black pepper
 1 medium head of cauliflower, trimmed, cut into small florets (about 3 cups)
 1 (15-ounce) can white beans (such as Great Northern or navy beans), drained
 2 large heads of Belgian endive, trimmed, halved lengthwise, then thinly sliced crosswise
 1 tablespoon chopped fresh chives
 2 teaspoons chopped fresh parsley
 1/2 cup crumbled feta cheese (about 3 ounces)

- Combine oil and rosemary in small saucepan. Stir over medium heat just until fragrant, about 1 minute. Cool.
- Whisk lemon juice, vinegar, lemon peel, salt, and pepper in small bowl.
- Combine cauliflower, beans, endive, chives, parsley, and rosemary oil in medium bowl; toss. Mix in cheese. Add lemon juice mixture and toss to coat. Season salad with salt and pepper.

Marinated Baby Vegetables

6 cups assorted trimmed baby vegetables (such as halved fingerling and purple potatoes, baby carrots, brussels sprouts, cauliflower, pearl onions, pattypan squash, and/or strips of large vegetables like bell peppers)

1 cup olive oil
 1/2 cup Champagne vinegar
 4 small bay leaves
 2 teaspoons coarse kosher salt
 2 teaspoons freshly ground black pepper
 1 teaspoon fennel seeds
 1 teaspoon dried oregano
 1/4 teaspoon dried crushed red pepper



- Steam all vegetables until potatoes are tender, about 8 minutes. Transfer to large bowl.
- Meanwhile, bring remaining ingredients to boil in medium saucepan, whisking until salt dissolves. Pour over vegetables. Let marinate at least 15 minutes, tossing occasionally. Serve warm or at room temperature.

Cauliflower Puree

1/2 lb cauliflower florets, chopped (2 2/3 cups)
 1 garlic clove, smashed
 1/3 cup chicken broth
 1/2 teaspoon salt
 2 tablespoons heavy cream
 1 teaspoon unsalted butter

- Simmer cauliflower, garlic, broth, and salt in a small saucepan, covered, until cauliflower is very tender, about 10 minutes.
- Purée mixture with cream and butter in a food processor until smooth (use caution when blending hot liquids), or mash with a potato masher or a fork.